4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

the forgiveness" of the departed, and sing funeral songs in his honour.

When, as often happens, a man dies at a distance from his home, on the arrival of the tidings of his death, the funeral ceremonies are, with the exception of the actual interment, performed as above described. The women lament, friends hasten to comfort them, and the procession goes to church, the place of the bier being occupied by a youth, who carries the dish of *Kólyva*, on which is placed a cake for the priest.

Only slight changes are generally made in their dress by the Albanian women on the death of a relative. The chief mourners cut their hair short, turn their coats inside out, so that the fur lining alone is seen, and lay aside all ornaments. The nieces of the deceased allow their hair to hang loose for some months, or cut off a lock, and wear on their heads a black kerchief. A similar head-dress is assumed by the widow, who, if she has arrived at middle age, wears it for the rest of her life. If, however, she is still young, and intends to return to her father's house with the expectation of finding another husband, she wears at the same time her bridal apparel, and does not manifest such an exaggerated degree of grief.

Sometimes, as illustrated in the history of Shainitza[1] and in folk-tale,[2] the grief of the women finds expression in giving to their dwelling the most dismal and funereal appearance, by painting black either the whole of the outside of the house, or the shutters only, and covering up or removing from their usual places the mirrors and other ornaments.

[1] See p. 225. [2] P. 315.

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

In a few cases vengeance was lawfully taken by men who were not, strictly speaking, members of the victim's family. Theoretically, the man who had 'drunk blood' with the victim[1] and so had become his foster-brother could not go alone to avenge him, for he had not been an actual member of his household. In Lumë and Labinot such a man was held to the letter of the law, and could take vengeance only when accompanied by the victim's 'brother'; taking it when alone involved him in a separate feud with the murderer, with no benefit to the victim's family. In many other districts it was recognized that great love must have existed between the two men before they swore blood-brotherhood, and in virtue of that love one could, even when alone, lawfully avenge the other. In Dibër, indeed, he had no choice but to do so, and often outstripped a brother by birth. In Shkrel such vengeance has been taken 'five hundred times'. On the other hand, a compromise was the rule in western Mat. Solitary vengeance by a foster-brother was theoretically as unlawful as in Lumë, but in practice it was generally legalized by the 'master' of the feud, who sent the foster-brother a cartridge and so recognized him after the event as his emissary. Wherever foster-brothers had the right to take solitary vengeance, they seem to have derived it from their community of blood with the victim. For only those united by the drinking of blood possessed the right; those united by any other ceremony, by hair-cutting, for instance, were denied it. And in districts where they had the right, one could not go alone to avenge any relative of the other's. During their lifetime each regarded the other's relatives as father, brother, etc., and was regarded by them as son and brother, but when one was killed, the other ranked as an alien by blood and household and could only avenge his foster-brother by joining an expedition led by their 'master'. And almost everywhere blood-brotherhood was recognized as a complete bar to marriage between the two families.

Relations on the female side could always avenge a murdered man by joining an expedition led by his 'master'. Opinions differed about their right to avenge him when alone. Shkrel, the Malësi e Madhe generally, and Labinot held to the logical view. A sister's son, they said, although called 'nephew' like a brother's son, belonged to his father's family and was an outsider in his mother's. He had, therefore, no right, joint expeditions apart, to

[1] I.e. had sworn blood-brotherhood with him.

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

avenge or to be avenged by his maternal 'uncle', that is to say, the males in his mother's family. The two men belonged to different households, and if one attempted independently to avenge the other, he meddled in business that was no concern of his and so could only involve himself in a separate feud. The men of Shkrel in the Malësi e Madhe who felt so little duty towards their maternal 'uncle' that they would entertain his murderer were therefore within their rights. On the other hand, in central and east Albania—in Çermenikë, Dibër, Kurbin, Lumë and Martanesh—it was held that a man could not avenge his maternal 'uncle' but could be avenged by him, a law said in Kurbin to have been of Skanderbeg's making. As a corollary, if a native of these districts did avenge his maternal 'uncle', he plumed himself on the deed more than a nephew in the male line could have done; the latter, as a member of the dead family, could not escape the obligation and would not have been involved in a new feud as he, the outsider, had been.

The confused practice is locally explained as follows: A man could not avenge his maternal 'uncle' because he was the son of his mother and she as a woman had no rifle, presumably to hand on to him with all its offensive and defensive possibilities; the rifle he carried came to him as a member of his father's family. On the other hand, he could be avenged by his maternal 'uncle' for the same reason that the latter was entitled, when his 'sister's' daughter was married, to receive a 'maternal uncle's fee' at the time of the wedding and, if she was afterwards killed, to avenge her. For the maternal 'uncle' regarded his 'sister's' children as his own and as part of his own household; in Kurbin, indeed, a man owned a quarter share in his 'sister's' son. Further, since a woman could not carry a rifle, a 'sister' could not defend herself, and therefore, retained the right for herself and her children to be protected by her 'brother'. In Dibër, where rich and powerful men were so few that girls must often be given in marriage to men who were neither, this feeling that 'sisters' and their issue might require protection was pronounced.

In south Albania, on the other hand, a man would both avenge and be avenged by his maternal 'uncle'. A classic instance of the former process at Melesinë near Leskovik is commemorated in the song beginning:

> Melesinë on a hill,
> For his uncle fights a sister's son.

The other rite, godfather head, has its
608 motivation in exactly the same circumstances;
852 but it is made to coincide with another rite of passage, that of the first haircut of a baby boy, the son of one of the participants. The father, child, and prospective godfather meet outdoors, in the presence of other kin. The godfather holds the boy in his lap, and snips off 4 locks of hair, if Christian, and 3, if Moslem. The difference lies in the refusal of the Moslem to make the sign of the cross. The godfather then burns the hair. A feast follows, during which the godfather gives the father a present of cash, the father reciprocating with a gift of fine clothing.

● 604 Both of these rites place the descendants of
614 the 2 principals in an incest relationship. They do not, however, apply to collateral kin, for if *A* and *B* become blood brothers or godfathers, *A*'s brother's son can still wed *B*'s daughter, while *A*'s son cannot. This complicates the picture beyond this simple *fis* system and provides a number of special relationships to meet individual requirements. Needless to say, the local Catholic clergy frown on both these practices.

1 [blood brotherhood and godfather head see
cat. 116, pp. 29a - 29b .. Analyst']